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URGENT TELEGRAM

Department of State

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AIR

NIC

FROM: Guatemala City

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 162, October 26, 1 a.m.

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Control: 16759
October 26, 1957
1:19 p.m.

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 6/4/75

PER Fumbras OFFICE ARA

FADRC FOI CASE NO. 5-B-201

By this morning political situation had deteriorated to new low. Junta was seeking desperately for solution avoid bloodshed but was unwilling accept Ydigoras extreme demands he be made President at once. PR and Communists were actively taking advantage of situation to marshall agitators and demonstrators and it looked as if open clash between army and police and opposition groups was imminent. Meanwhile there were reports Junta was talking to PR representatives in effort persuade them call off their demonstrators. Talks between Ydigoras and representatives of Junta were getting nowhere and Ydigoras confident he held the cards was intransigent.

Plan of group of Guatemalan congressmen to declare Flores Avendano interim president was not (repeat not) acceptable to Ydigoras because he wanted Congress proclaim him President without new elections. Moreover, Junta was reluctant accept Flores Avendano.

In this atmosphere of mounting tension and indecision representatives of Junta called this morning on Colonels Cubbison and Hetsel stating Junta wished know how firm was US insistence on constitutionality. I explained US believed Guatemala best interests would be served by adhering to constitution but it was most important Guatemala find adequate solution to present critical problem and particularly ensure Communists be kept out of GCG. To ensure Junta understood and more particularly for urgent humanitarian reasons I authorized Cubbison and Hetsel to see Junta. When they arrived at Palace they found Junta had been meeting with representatives of all political parties except that of Ydigoras in effort find some way of putting end to disturbances. Junta was at wits' end and

worried

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-2- 162, October 26, 1 a.m. from Guatemala City

worried about possible bogotazo. Cubbison was instrumental having Ydigoras meet with Junta.

Ydigoras arrived with three advisors. Colonel Mendoza asked him tell people go home adding army had sufficient means deal with situation. Ydigoras refused do so until situation was resolved. One of Ydigoras advisors suggested Congress be convoked to declare Flores Avendano President and Congress later recount votes or declare Ortiz ineligible or make Ydigoras President on grounds elections were fraudulent. Other possible constitutional solutions were suggested but all of them involved decision by Congress which would have effect making Ydigoras next President without new elections.

When impasse continued it was suggested that 24 hour truce be called with Ydigoras telling his followers go home during which period Junta would consider his proposals. Agreement was signed and read to crowd. It said Ydigoras would call upon Guatemalan people withdraw from streets for 24 hours in order prevent disorders which might be taken advantage of by Communist elements.

Junta during this time would study situation and propose solution and would communicate its decision to Ydigoras and public. Agreement also stated persons who did not obey instructions of Ydigoras and other anti-Communist groups would be considered Communists and would be subject to consequences. Finally agreement stated Junta is anti-Communist and has no (repeat no) commitment to any political organization. Announcement was previously made over government radio calling on PR adherents to cease demonstrating today "in accordance with understanding between Junta and PR". Foregoing announcements caused crowds go home.

During course of talks Colonel Cubbison emphasized in strong terms our interest in assuring any government which emerges be absolutely free of Communist influence. Both Junta and Ydigoras were grateful to Colonels Cubbison and Hetzel.

SPARKS

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NOTE: Advance copy to Mr. King (MID) 2:15 p.m., 10/26/CWO-FED

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CCT 23 AM Control: 16841
Rec'd: October 26, 1957
11:30 p.m.

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FROM: Guatemala City

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 165, October 26

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NIACT

This document released to
public per Executive Order 13526

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Junta's decision annual election and ask Congress call for new ones was preceded by official radio announcements which included statement following effect: All activity to impede return to order and harmony will be considered as subversion and repressed drastically. Statements of political groups to effect they have no control over demonstrators is clear evidence that this activity is identified with Communism which is trying to take advantage of situation to infiltrate public administration. Consequently Junta declares that it will use every means to deal with the clearly defined intent of Communists.

SPARKS

MLJ/1

NOTE: Mr. King (ARA) notified 10/26/11:44 pm FMH

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